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Harrah's Rincon Code Green Story

The Launch

Harrah's Rincon formally launched its Green Committee in December, 2007. Although recycling and energy efforts had been underway for some time, this was the first attempt to bring resources from various disciplines on the property together to focus on this effort. Because Janet Beronio, Rincon's General Manager, had been participating on the company Green Committee, she was able to provide some direction as to how we should organize and what efforts should be undertaken to begin to move a program forward. A request was made at a management meeting for volunteers to participate on the Committee from Facilities, Purchasing, Food & Beverage, Human Resources, Hotel and Gaming. There were volunteers from other areas as well who had a passion for the mission.

The Committee held its initial meeting the first week of January, and Janet presented the company direction as well as materials she had gathered from other Harrah's properties (i.e. Atlantic City, Tunica), who were well on the way in their programs.

The Organization

Brendan O'Kane, our Facilities Manager was selected as Chairman. The group very quickly decided to organize itself around three subcommittees – Energy, Recycling/Reuse and Communication/Employee Engagement. Subcommittee chairs were selected: Energy (Brendan O'Kane), Recycling (John Sebastian, Director Table Games), Communication/Employee Engagement (Kathy Box, Training & Development Manager). All of the volunteers aligned themselves on the various subcommittees. At this time, there are 18 management volunteers.

The Green Committee decided to meet weekly at least for awhile, and the subcommittees set up various schedules for their own meetings. Although there were many ideas put on the table, the group decided to focus on doing just a few things first, and doing them well. We dubbed this "our low hanging fruit".

The Low Hanging Fruit:

Energy Audit: In 2006, Rincon began negotiations for an energy audit through Trane Energy Services. Trane completed a preliminary audit and presented those findings to the Rincon Tribal Council in early 2007. The Council approved Trane to move forward with an investment grade audit. Due to funding considerations, contract negotiations, and some time in a "wait and see" mode while the Company considered a coordinated approach to energy audits (particularly at pilot properties), the audit did not move forward until January, 2008. The findings of that audit are expected to be communicated in late February 08.

Other Energy Initiatives:

- Lighting retrofits have been an ongoing program at Harrah's Rincon since 2002. Most signage, the parking garage, guest rooms and casino floor lighting have already been addressed.
- Motion sensors for lighting in BOH and office areas are being explored.
- Computer monitors have been reconfigured to auto-off after 5 minutes.
- Ongoing training on adjusting temperature in guestrooms to 74 degrees/summer and 68 degrees/winter is ongoing.
- Casino temperature has been adjusted a few degrees up/down.

Recycling/Reuse:

Recycler: When the property opened in late 2002, we had installed a cardboard baler in the hopes of lowering our waste hauling fees and receiving a return from baled cardboard. That effort was abandoned due to high labor costs. Other efforts at recycling never really had a sustainable plan around them, and we weren't successful in engaging a recycling company to take our waste due to our remote location.

In (March) 2007, (we reached an agreement with our contracted waste management company to provide a 40 yard recycling compactor free of charge to the Casino. Our agreement allows for co-mingled recyclables to be placed in the compactor and puts the onus on the waste management company to then sort the recyclables at their offsite transfer station. This simplifies the recycling steps for our employees, eliminating the need for separate containers for glass, paper and plastic in our BOH capturing of recyclable material. The program has been in place since February 15th and we have successfully diverted over 11 tons of recyclable material from the landfill in the first 4 weeks of operation.) Following installation of this compactor, we began negotiations with a recycling company and are hoping to execute a contract in the near future. When that is completed, the Committee will be able to launch in earnest a plan to recycle cardboard, aluminum, newspapers and plastic. In the interim, the subcommittee is identifying locations to create recycling stations BOH and at casino bars.

Other Recycling Initiatives:

- Recycling/disposal of old computers/monitors (ongoing)
- Recapture of guest room newspapers
- "Bring your own cup" campaign being developed
- Utilizing eco-friendly chemicals (ongoing)
- Exploring recycling of food waste

Communication/Employee Engagement:

We believe there is no honor in recreating the wheel when there are best demonstrated practices out there. So, the Committee decided to adopt practices from Harrah's Atlantic City and Tunica, and adopted the Atlantic City green logo to begin their communications program. "It Takes a HERO to Save a Planet" became the first logo and slogan to draw interest from the employee base.

Additional Communication Initiatives:

- EDR "green" bulletin board
- "Green" Suggestion Box with both e-mail (GreenTeam@ Harrahs.com – unique to Rincon) and paper form access
- Weekly employee newsletter article
- Monthly "Green Up!" paragraph for eco-friendly topics for both home and work
- Bringing eco-friendly/green information into communications where appropriate
- Managing forward to an employee component/contribution

Setting the Baseline:

The Committee recognizes the need to establish baseline measurements in order to understand what success looks like. They will use the direction and template set by the Corporate green committee to put this in place. Results from the Trane energy audit will also help us set the energy baselines. Volume data for recyclables is being collected as we proceed more slowly into this area.

Other Efforts:

- Coordination with Rincon Tribe in reservation "green" efforts
- Community outreach/involvement